

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FAA-00 DOTE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 INRE-00 NSC-05
SS-15 USIE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /046 R

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 177121

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PINT, EAIR, MILI, PN, PQ, BL

SUBJECT: ALLEGED BUZZING OF HELICOPTER CARRYING BANZER AND
TORRIJOS

REFERENCES: (A) DAVIS-KEIL TELECON; (B) USCINCSO MSG. DTG
270621Z JULY 77; (C) PANAMA 5371; (D) PANAMA 5388; (E)
PANAMA 5389

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR JULY 27 NOON
PRESS BRIEFING AND TELEPHONED TO YOU REF A:

BEGIN QUOTE Q: THERE IS A REPORT THAT THE PANAMANIAN HAVE
COMPLAINED THAT U.S. PLANES BUZZED A PANAMANIAN HELICOPTER
CARRYING BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT BANZER AND PANAMANIAN CHIEF
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OF GOVERNMENT TORRIJOS. CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT AND TELL US
WHAT HAPPENED?

A: AT THIS TIME WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ALL OF THE FACTS WITH
REGARD TO THIS INCIDENT. WE UNDERSTAND THAT PANAMANIAN
AND U.S. MILITARY AUTHORITIES IN PANAMA CONFERRED THIS
MORNING ABOUT THE INCIDENT REPORTED TO HAVE OCCURRED YESTER-

DAY.

FOR DETAILS, I REFER YOU TO THE FAA AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. HOWEVER, OUR EMBASSY HAS REPORTED THAT COMPLETE FAA LOGS ARE AVAILABLE OF THE CONVERSATION WITH THE HELICOPTER AND THE U.S. PLANES ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED, AND IT IS OUR CLEAR UNDERSTANDING THAT NO DANGER TO THE HELICOPTER WAS EVER POSED BY AMERICAN AIRCRAFT.

WE, OF COURSE, REGRET ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS THAT MAY HAVE LED TO THIS INCIDENT. END QUOTE

2. SUBJECT DID NOT COME UP AT BRIEFING, BUT GUIDANCE WAS USED IN RESPONDING TO SUBSEQUENT TELEPHONE INQUIRIES FROM WIRE SERVICES.

3. REF B, WHICH CONTAINS ADDITIONAL DATA ON INCIDENTS, BEING REPEATED TO YOU FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

4. THE FOLLOWING IS THE PRESS GUIDANCE WE HAVE PREPARED FOR TODAY'S NOON BRIEFING. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE IT AS NEEDED.

BEGIN QUOTE Q: HAS THERE BEEN ANY COMPLAINT FILED BY THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT OVER THE INCIDENT INVOLVING THE HELICOPTER CARRYING GENERAL TORRIJOS AND BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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BANZER?

A: WE HAVE RECEIVED NO COMPLAINT. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE, THE PANAMANIAN AIR FORCE AND THE FAA MET YESTERDAY AND DETERMINED THAT NO DANGER TO THE HELICOPTER WAS EVER POSED BY U.S. AIRCRAFT. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT THE FAA HAS TAPES OF THE GROUND-TO-AIR CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE CONTROL TOWER AND THE AIRCRAFT AND THAT THESE DO NOT INDICATE ANY PROBLEM. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS SUBJECT I REFER YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE FAA. END QUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BRIEFING MATERIALS, PRESS CONFERENCES, ALLEGATIONS, AIRCRAFT HARASSMENT, HELICOPTERS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE177121
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: DGWAGNER:ZC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770271-0113
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977078/aaaaagnv.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 78ee146f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1928514
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGED BUZZING OF HELICOPTER CARRYING BANZER AND TORRIJOS
TAGS: PBOR, PINT, EAIR, MILI, SOPN, PN, PQ, BL, US, (BANZER SUAREZ, HUGO), (TORRIJOS HERRERA, OMAR)
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/78ee146f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009